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Honorable Lee H. Hamilton House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hamilton:		FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMUNICATION OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY	
This is in reply to your letter of	April 1, 1993, in whic	h you inquired/on	
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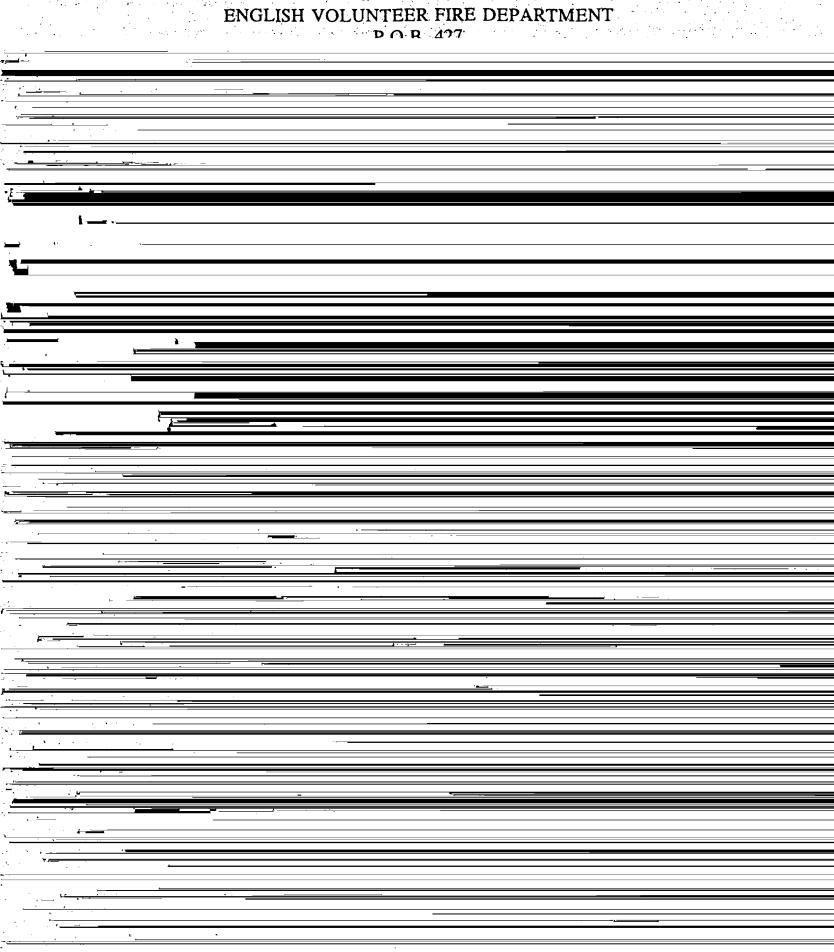
Congressional

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CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING SYSTEM

Cungress of the United States House of Representatives. **W**ashington, **D**.C.



PURPOSE

On June 13, 1991, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) initiated a Notice of Inquiry to "explore options for promoting more effective and efficient use of the bands below 470 MHz." This action has become known as "refarming."

Five months later, the FCC held an all-day conference on refarming where technical and public policy questions were addressed. The FCC declared the refarming issue "the most significant issue taken up in the past 30 years."

Proposed rules for the refarming were issued on October 8, 1992 (PR Docket 92-235). However, the 432-page document covers more than just refarming. Part 90 of the FCC's rules would be completely rewritten and designated Part 88.

The FCC's objective in this effort is to increase, eventually by several times, the number of usable frequencies in the upper VHF (150-174 MHz) and lower HF (450-512 MHz) in the Landbile Radio services primarily gh channel splitting, a very le goal that has broad support.

ntentions are admirable; their approved, devastating...

DETAILS

The FCC plans to split the land mobile radio channels from 15 kHz and in many cases from 30 kHz eventually down to 5 kHz in the VHF band, and from 25 kHz down to 6.25 kHz in the UHF band. Initially, existing users would be required to reduce the width of their assigned frequencies by half by January 1, 1996. The reduction of channel width in existing radios, the FCC was advised by its staff, is a simple screwdriver adjustment of the transmitter deviation.

Unfortunately, true channel splitting is not so simple. Reducing the deviation of the transmitter will also substantially reduce the performance and reliability of the system. In a system like ours here in Harrison County, this adjustment would effectively reduce our repeater coverage by at least 50%.

More significantly, the assignment and use of the newly created adjacent channels would result in widespread interference to existing systems, because you will continue to receive signals over the entire 15 kHz channel. Receiver narrowbanding requires much more than a screwdriver adjustment. It requires, if even possible, a major and costly overhaul...

BAD NEWS

Totally unrelated to channel splitting is—the—FCC's proposal—to—limit—drastically the power output of stations located on high ground. Our repeater currently operates with an output power of 90 watts, the maximum allowed under our FCC license. Under the proposed Part 88, our repeater system will be limited to a maximum output power of 10 watts! Radio repeaters and base stations at even higher elevations will be limited to only one watt!

Mobile radios, operating on our repeater system, will be limited to a power output of 25 watts under the new rules. This means that most of your mobile radios will be required to have their output power reduced by 50-75%.

What's the FCC's reasoning behind all of this? According to them, the proposals were designed to "reduce congestion, meet future communications capacity needs, and permit, facilitate, and encourage licensees to be spectrum efficient."

What will the FCC do with all of the newly created channels? They plan to take 258 pairs of these channels and auction them off to private industry! In the very near future, our only option will be to lease air-time from an SMR.



What Can Be Done?

rts of this brochure, but I do want to imphasize the significance of these

The FCC's public comment period for the Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) ends on May 28,

Proposed FCC